**ABBO OF SAINT-GERMAIN-DES-PRÉS**

Abbo, a native of Neustria and a pupil of Aimoin, was a monk of Saint-Germain-des-Prés; he died on 9 March sometime after 921. He is known for two works, the **Bella Parisiacae urbis** and a collection of **Sermons**. The first is divided here into two entries because, although there is some evidence that the entire work was known to the Anglo-Saxons, most of our information concerns only Book III, which circulated independently of the first two books. For a discussion of the little known about his life, see Önnerfors (1985 pp 16–18).For further bibliography, see *CSLMA AG* 1.3–7.

**Bella Parisiacae urbis** [ABBO.ST.GERM.Bell.Par.urb.].

ed.: *MGH* PLAC 4.77–122.

*MSS*   none.

*Lists*   Æthelwold: ML 4.10.

*A-S Vers* – *Refs*   none.

This poem, completed by 896–97 (see Lendinara 1986 p 74 note 4), consists of three books: the first two describe the siege of Paris by the Vikings (885–86) and some of the following events up to 896; and the much shorter third book (see below) pretends to offer moral advice to young clerics. The entry in the Æthelwold booklist, “Descidia Parisiace polis,” indicates that the entire work was known in Anglo-Saxon England since the siege is not mentioned in Book III (Lendinara 1986 p 73). Lendinara (1990 p 139) speculates that it may have been intro­duced into England by Oda, archbishop of Canterbury (941–58), or by Dunstan. The fifteenth-century Peterborough *Matricularium* (ed. James 1926 nos. 125, 133, and 136) lists three volumes said to contain “Versus Abonis,” but in this case there is no way of deciding whether they refer to a work by this or some other Abbo, perhaps **ABBO OF FLEURY**.

**Book III** of the *Bella Parisiacae urbis*.

ed.: *MGH* PLAC 4.116–22.

*MSS*   1. Cambridge, University Library Gg.5.35: HG 12.

2. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 326: HG 93.

3. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates 18.6.12: HG 252.

4. London, BL Harley 3271: HG 435.

5. London, BL Harley 3826: HG 438.

*Lists*   see above.

*A-S Vers* – *Refs*   none.

Consisting of 115 lines, this book differs in subject matter, tone, and diction from the previous two books. For example, one of the precepts that it offers to the cleric (addressed as “cleronomus”) is “Prodigus, obliqus, monotalmus, subdolus haud sis” (III.35). By writing such lines, Abbo meant to mock the Greek vogue of his time, that is, the penchant for grec­isms and rare words in general. Many of the unusual words have coun­ter­parts in bilingual or monolingual glossaries such as the *Liber glossarum* (see **GLOSSARIES**; about 150 of the words that begin mostly with the letters A through E were drawn from this source). Another source, iden­ti­fied by Laistner (1924), were the **Scholica Graecarum Glossarum** (see Glossaries). It is from such compilations that Abbo drew not only his “difficult” vocabulary, but also the interlinear glosses that he himself provided for about half of the words in this book.

It was this vocabulary, especially the Greek loanwords, that was respon­sible for the popularity of this book in Anglo-Saxon England (see Lendinara 1990 p 133). It entered the curriculum of the English schools of the tenth and eleventh centuries, and it provided a sourcebook of “her­meneutic” vocabulary for many Anglo-Latin authors (see also Lapidge 1975a pp 71–72, 75–76, 78, 101, and 123). Lendinara (1990 p 139) sug­gests that it was most likely at Canterbury where this study began, calling attention to a previously unprinted glossary in Cotton Domitian i, from St Augustine’s, Canterbury (ed. Lendinara 1990 pp 144–49). The first 199 lemmata (followed by one or more *inter­pre­ta­menta*) are identical with words and glosses of this book. (See Lendinara 1996 for a discussion of the glossary in a thirteenth-century British Library manuscript, Royal 7. D. ii, which also contains batches of entries drawn from this book.) The two other Cambridge manuscripts of the work are also from Canterbury; the copy in Corpus Christi College contains only the first seventeen lines.

In addition to Book III with interlinear Latin glosses (fols 118v–120r), Harley 3271 contains a Latin prose version with Old English contextual glosses. These glosses have been edited by both Zupitza (1887 pp 1–27) and Stevenson and Lindsay (1929 no. 7, pp 103–12); the *MCOE* is thus misleading in distinguishing Abbo 1 (C1.1) and Abbo 2 (C1.2) on the basis of these editions, and the *Dictionary of Old English* now has only the short title Abbo, which refers to the text in Harley 3271 and variants, when they occur, from Oxford, St John’s College 154. Lapidge (1975a p 75) argues that the manuscript arrangement in Harley 3271 reflects the way students approached the text, first through the prose with its vernac­ular glosses. This prose version, also with interlinear Old English glosses, appears on the last folios (221v–22r) in St John’s College 154, breaking off with “esto memor tui gallonis” (compare III.53, and see Lendinara 1986 p 85). The Old English glosses of these two manuscripts have several phonological and morphological differences, and the Latin ver­sions are marked by independent omissions of the original text, although they possibly derive from the same original. The language of the glosses is clearly late West Saxon, but their vocabulary shows non-West Saxon traces; the presence of *ælfremed* (if it was already in the original gloss) would date the Old English gloss after the middle of the tenth century (see Hofstetter 1987 no. 210).

Patrizia Lendinara

**Sermons**

There remains some uncertainty about the original shape of Abbo’s collection and about the form in which his sermons were known in Anglo-Saxon England. The most recent editor, Önnerfors (1985), has published the first twenty-four items (but note 2a, 21a, and 22a) from a twelfth-century Paris manuscript, previously at Saint-Germain-des-Prés, arguing that these, along with the prologue and list of contents with thirty-seven items, should be the starting point for the study of Abbo’s collection (p 38). The five sermons printed in the *PL* are included in Önnerfors (7, 13, 10, 9, and 14), as are the eight sermons, treated separately below, preserved in Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek G.K.S 1595 (4o) (HG 814), identified by Cross and Tunberg (1993 p 13), as copied at the order of **WULFSTAN OF YORK**. Thus the numbering used here follows Önner­fors (1985). Cross and Brown (1993 p 78), however, speculate that the rubric of one of the items in the Copenhagen manuscript (5, the first of the material drawn from Abbo), which retains a reference to chapter 36, may indicate that Wulfstan had access to a full collection of Abbo’s sermons; their connections between **Sermo 1** and Wulfstan’s *Homily* 3 (ed. Bethu­rum 1971 pp 123–27) would support this claim.

The relationship of three sermons by Abbo (10, 12, and 13) to the writings of Wulfstan requires additional comment. All three appear in an abbreviated form in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 190, a manu­script of Wulfstan’s “Commonplace Book”; the abbreviated forms of 10 and 13 also appear in two manuscripts in the British Library, Cotton Nero A. i and Cotton Vitellius A. vii. Bethurum (1971 pp 345–46) identifies the shortened version of 13 as the source for Wulfstan’s *Homily* 15 (pp 236–38; see the entry below for a reference to a second Old English translation of this adaptation) and notes that it is “quite likely” that Wulf­stan himself had made the Latin abridgment as well. Cross and Brown (1993 p 72) agree and provide further reasons to believe that Wulfstan was responsible for all three Latin abridgments.

**Sermo 1** [ABBO.ST.GERM.Serm.1].

ed.: Önnerfors 1985 pp 66–71.

*MSS* – *A-S Vers*   none.

*Quots/Cits*   1. 67.2–4: WHom 3.45–48.

2. 67.11–14: WHom 3.48–49.

3. 67.18–21: WHom 3.50–52.

*Refs*   none.

This sermon, which treats the end of time, is drawn largely from **HAYMO OF AUXERRE**, **Homilia de Tempore** 2 (*PL* 118.17–25). Cross and Brown (1993 pp 79–80), however, note the three quotations above that indicate that in his third *Homily*, **WULFSTAN OF YORK** (ed. Bethurum 1971 pp 123–27) followed elaborations in Abbo. They also pro­vide four examples of places where Wulfstan follows Abbo in pro­viding additional passages from scripture, including two cases in which he uses Abbo’s adaptations of the biblical verses.

**Sermo 6** [ABBO.ST.GERM.Serm.6].

ed.: Önnerfors 1985 pp 94–99.

*MSS*   Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek G.K.S. 1595 (4o): HG 814.

*Lists* – *A-S Vers*   none.

*Quots/Cits*   see below.

*Refs*   none.

Cross and Brown (1993) note the similarities in theme between this sermon, which exhorts its “listeners and readers to *justum bellum* in defence of their own land against not only attackers but enemies of God” (p 280), and **WULFSTAN OF YORK**’s *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* (WHom 20, B2.4.2; 3 versions ed. Bethurum 1971 pp 255–75). Whitelock (1963 p 37) notes a probable influence on Wulfstan’s sermon from a passage in a manuscript of his “Commonplace Book,” Corpus Christi College 190. Cross and Tunburg (1993 p 18) identify Abbo’s sermon as a source for this passage and indeed for two others in the same section of the Corpus manuscript, one of which, as Bethurum notes (1971 pp 297–98), was used by Wulfstan in *Homily* 6, lines 115–21. Cross and Brown (1989) con­clude: “No doubt Wulfstan was impressed by Abbo’s verve and, directly through the sermon or indirectly through the Corpus extracts, was incited to produce his own sermon with appropriate contemporary reference but with the same purpose” (p 280).

The text is also edited in Cross and Brown (1989 pp 281–84) from the Copenhagen manuscript and is translated (pp 285–87).

**Sermo 7** [ABBO.ST.GERM.Serm.7].

ed.: Önnerfors 1985 pp 100–03.

*MSS*   Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek G.K.S. 1595 (4o): HG 814.

*Lists* – *Refs*   none.

Abbo’s topic is the Lord’s supper. The sermon is also printed in *PL* 132.763–64.

**Sermo 8** [ABBO.ST.GERM.Serm.8].

ed.: Önnerfors 1985 pp 104–07.

*MSS*   Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek G.K.S. 1595 (4o): HG 814.

*Lists* – *Refs*   none.

Abbo’s topic is again the Lord’s supper, “ad penitentes recon­ci­li­andos”; the title in the Copenhagen manuscript is “sermo ad populum.”

**Sermo 9** [ABBO.ST.GERM.Serm.9].

ed.: Önnerfors 1985 pp 108–09.

*MSS*   Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek G.K.S. 1595 (4o): HG 814.

*Lists* – *Refs*   none.

Abbo’s topic is again the Lord’s supper, “ad penitentes reconciliatos”; the Copenhagen manuscript adds “aecclesiae.”

This sermon is also printed in *PL* 132.770.

**Sermo 10** [ABBO.ST.GERM.Serm.10].

ed.: Önnerfors 1985 pp 110–12.

*MSS*   Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek G.K.S. 1595 (4o): HG 814.

*Lists*   none.

*A-S Vers*   see below.

*Quots/Cits* – *Refs*   none.

This sermon is addressed to penitents not yet reconciled to the Church. As noted above (**Sermons**), this is one of three sermons abridged pos­sibly by **WULFSTAN OF YORK** and preserved in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 190 and in two British Library manuscripts, Cotton Nero A. i and Cotton Vitellius A. vii. The abridged version is translated in the second part of Corpus Christi 190 (B.3.2.9; unpublished).

The sermon is also printed in *PL* 132.769–70.

**Sermo 11** [ABBO.ST.GERM.Serm.11].

ed.: Önnerfors 1985 pp 113–17.

*MSS*   Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek G.K.S. 1595 (4o): HG 814.

*Lists* – *Refs*   none.

This sermon condemns those who steal from the poor since such sins make the nation vunerable to attack from outside.

**Sermo 12** [ABBO.ST.GERM.Serm.12].

ed.: Önnerfors 1985 pp 118–22.

*MSS*   Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek G.K.S. 1595 (4o): HG 814.

*Lists*   none.

*A-S Vers*   see below.

*Quots/Cits* – *Refs*   none.

This sermon stresses the importance of humility and obedience to God’s laws. As noted above (**Sermons**), this is one of three sermons abridged possibly by **WULFSTAN OF YORK** and preserved in Cam­bridge, Corpus Christi College 190.

**Sermo 13** [ABBO.ST.GERM.Serm.13].

ed.: Önnerfors 1985 pp 123–32.

*MSS*   Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek G.K.S. 1595 (4o): HG 814.

*Lists*   none.

*A-S Vers*   see below.

*Quots/Cits* – *Refs*   none.

Abbo develops his topic, the Lord’s supper, by discussing Adam and the ways to salvation. As noted above (**Sermons**), this is one of three sermons abridged possibly by **WULFSTAN OF YORK** and preserved in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 190 and in two British Library manu­scripts, Cotton Nero A. i and Cotton Vitellius A. vii. The abridged version is the source for Wulfstan’s *Homily* 15 (ed. Bethurum 1971 pp 236–38). Bethurum suggests that Wulfstan may also have relied on a closely translated Old English version of the abridgment also preserved in the Cambridge manuscript, but Clemoes (1960 p 272) and Cross and Brown (1993 p 72) disagree.

The sermon is also printed in *PL* 132.764–68.

J. E. Cross and Alan Brown